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Cynnane ‘The Illyrian’? The Perils of Onomastics

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Aristobulus and then Megillos, as well as the similar use of the phrase for water enclosures, may suggest that it was Aristobulus who originally quoted Megillos. If this assumption is possible, Megillos could be the earliest Greek authority on Indian rice and thus the Greeks knew details of rice cultivation before Alexander went to India.

3. CONCLUSION

There is no convincing reason to assume that Strabo's Megillos is a corruption of either Menyllos or Menippos. Therefore, we should accept it as Megillos. Kroll was not entirely wrong in saying that not much may be said about Megillos. The author, however, still deserves redemption from total anonymity and there are several assumptions regarding his identity we might offer with relatively high certainty even if these seem somewhat trivial: Megillos left a written Greek record of the cultivation of rice; this record could be part of a larger work possibly of botanical orientation or of geographical nature based on actual travel; the context in Strabo's *Geography* may suggest that Megillos' work possibly dealt with, at least, India; Megillos' work was available to Strabo (or to his sources, perhaps Aristobulus); Megillos saw rice fields and was therefore in the nearer or further East; Megillos lived before Strabo and probably at about the same time as Aristobulus, possibly before him. Last but not least, he may be the first Greek who saw and described the cultivation of Indian rice.

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CYNNANE 'THE ILLYRIAN'? THE PERILS OF ONOMASTICS*

Stating that Olympias and Eurydice fought the first war ever between women, Duris of Samos explained the behaviour of Eurydice by reporting that she learned the art of war from Cynnane 'the Illyrian' (ἀσκηθεῖσαν τὰ πολεμικά παρὰ Κυννάνῃ τῇ Ἰλλυρίδι).¹

Who was this Cynnane, or Cynna, as other sources call her? Born as the daughter of Philip II of Macedon and Audata, an Illyrian princess, she married Amyntas, Philip's nephew, who was murdered after the succession of Alexander to Philip. This rather short-lived marriage still produced a daughter, the above-mentioned Eurydice. After Alexander's death Cynnane managed to outmanoeuvre the plans of Antipater and Perdiccas and presented her daughter both to the army and the new king Philip III in order to arrange a marriage. She paid for this bold plan with her life but eventually succeeded.²

* I would like to thank Jörg Fündling and the anonymous reader of *CQ* for their helpful suggestions.

¹ Ath. 13.10 (560 f = Duris *FGrHist* 76 F 52), unnecessarily corrected to Κύννη by Kaibel. The reading of the codex Marcianus Venetus has already been defended by W. Heckel, 'Kynnane the Illyrian', *RSA* 13/14 (1983–4), 193–200, at 197.

² On the life of Cynnane, cf. *inter alia* H. Berve, *Das Alexanderreich auf prosopographischer Grundlage*, 2 vols. (Munich, 1926), 2.229 n. 456; M. Fluss, *RE Supplement* 6 (Stuttgart, 1935) s.v.

That this woman, daughter of the Macedonian king and reared up at the Macedonian court, is qualified by Duris as ‘the Illyrian’ seems remarkable: of course, she was the daughter of an Illyrian princess. But no one ever called Philip ‘the Illyrian’ although some authors contended that his mother was Illyrian, too.³

Duris’ epithet, together with the statement that Cynnane trained her daughter in the arts of war, led some scholars to the idea that Cynnane’s mother Audata had brought an Illyrian matriarchal tradition with her into the Argead dynasty: Johann Gustav Droysen in the nineteenth and Grace Macurdy in the early twentieth centuries already seem to have thought this way.⁴ The first to pronounce this idea prominently, though, was Sarah Pomeroy in the early 1980s.⁵ The idea was pushed further by Elizabeth Carney: in her important book on women and monarchy in Macedonia she deduced from Cynnane’s qualification by Duris that, if not her ethnicity, at least her ‘apparent cultural identity’ as Illyrian could be taken for granted.⁶ According to Carney an additional hint consists in Cynnane’s very name being Illyrian.⁷ The latter points at least, if not the whole story of a matrilineal hereditary Illyrian tradition, raise serious doubts.

First of all, if some Greek historian qualifies someone as ‘Illyrian’, this is an external judgement on a person he might not even have seen or spoken to. Such a statement reveals nothing about Cynnane’s cultural identity, and given the scanty evidence, we will never know if she felt more Macedonian or more Illyrian.

Secondly, her name: some ancient authors give it as Cynna, some as Cynane or Cynnane.⁸ Nearly absent in classical literature as it is, the name puzzled scholars for a long time, since they were quite unsure about its etymology. And, of course, a strange name in Macedonia could only be an Illyrian name – especially as the only classical author naming another woman called Cynna is probably talking of a *hetaira*.⁹ Once the hundreds of Greek *hetairai* had successfully been ignored, this could only have been a barbarian, and so – in spite of other voices¹⁰ – the name turned Illyrian, for example in Krahe’s lexicon of Illyrian names of 1929.¹¹

Further evidence for the Illyrian character of this name seemed to come from onomastic research on the Illyricum: the name Cinna is qualified as ‘Dardanian’ in the authoritative work of Wilkes on the Illyrians.¹² If one undertakes the rather arduous task to search out the evidence for this so-called Dardanian name, one gets rather

‘Kynna’, 209–11; Heckel (n. 1); E.D. Carney, *Women and Monarchy in Macedonia* (Norman, OK, 2000), esp. 58, 69–70 and 128–32.

³ Eurydice, Philip’s mother, an ‘Illyrian’: Plut. *Mor.* 14B–C; Lib. *Arg.D.* pr. 18; *Suda* s.v. *Κάρωνος*. On Eurydice, cf. also Carney (n. 2), 38–50.

⁴ J.G. Droysen, *Geschichte des Hellenismus*, vol. 2 (Basel, 1952³), 60; G.H. Macurdy, *Hellenistic Queens* (Baltimore, 1932), 48–9.

⁵ S. Pomeroy, *Women in Hellenistic Egypt* (New York, 1984), 6–7 and 122.

⁶ Carney (n. 2), 275 n. 27.

⁷ Carney (n. 2), 275 n. 27, referring to J. Wilkes, *The Illyrians* (Oxford and Cambridge, MA, 1992), 86; cautiously Heckel (n. 1), 196.

⁸ Cf. the exhaustive analysis by Heckel (n. 1).

⁹ Ar. *Eq.* 765 (adduced by H. Krahe, *Lexikon altillyrischer Personen* [Heidelberg, 1929], 33 s.v. *Cynna*), Ar. *Vesp.* 1032 and *Pax* 755 with the respective scholia.

¹⁰ O. Hoffmann, *Die Makedonen, ihre Sprache und ihr Volkstum* (Göttingen, 1906), 220 claims the name to be Greek.

¹¹ Krahe (n. 9), 33 s.v. *Cynna*; 151; in later works Krahe never mentioned the name again. Had his doubts, already mentioned in 1929, got too strong?

¹² Wilkes (n. 7), 85–6.

disappointed: the only source I was able to reconstruct is Papazoglu's book on the Central Balkan tribes, citing but one inscription found near present-day Skopje, in antiquity probably part of Dardania.¹³ This inscription is a grave-stele from the second century A.D. naming three persons who all use the Roman naming system with *nomen* and *cognomen*.¹⁴ The woman mentioned is called *Matri(---ia) Cinna*.

From the onomastic point of view this is rather problematic evidence to postulate an Illyrian (or Dardanian) name *Cinna* in order to prove that *Cynna(ne)* is also Illyrian in its turn: the inscription is at least 400 years later and was erected within an empire that enclosed the whole Mediterranean and prompted a rather high rate of mobility. This woman could just as well have been an immigrated Italian, Syrian or Macedonian, or the descendant of such immigrants. Of course, the geographic distribution of names could even in Roman times be a hint to the roots of a name – but only if it is attested in a sufficient number of specimens. One example without any further hints is completely useless when it comes to origins. Flipping through the Clauss–Slaby database of Latin inscriptions renders no other record for a woman with this name within the wider region of the western Balkan Peninsula.¹⁵ One wonders if Papazoglu interpreted *Cinna* as Dardanian because this name reminded her of *Cynna(ne)*, allegedly 'Illyrian'...

If one looks the other way round, there are not many but at least a handful of Greek inscriptions from *Greek* regions that mention persons called *Cynna* or *Cyn(n)ane*. Most of these come from Macedonia and Thessaly. The oldest is as early as the fourth century B.C., others are from the third century B.C. or of uncertain date. Another fourth-century inscription hails from the Greek *polis* of Nymphaeum on the Crimea.¹⁶ The name *Cynnīs*, probably related, is at least mentioned at the Dalmatian coast, but on a Greek inscription which otherwise mentions only Greek names.¹⁷

If one assumes that *Cinna* is equal to a shortened version of *Cynnane*'s name after all, we should rather propose that the woman from second-century A.D. Scupi may have used a Romanized Greek name. Nevertheless, it is far more prudent to keep clear of any such conclusion: the name is spelled like the well-recorded Latin (or Etruscan) *cognomen* *Cinna*,¹⁸ which, of course, is attested only for males.¹⁹ Until new evidence turns up we should abstain from guessing where this name, recorded in Roman imperial times, came from. After all, there is no convincing record for an ample use of the name *Cynnane* in Illyria, but we do have evidence that it was widely used in northern Greece as early as the late classical and early Hellenistic times.

¹³ F. Papazoglu, *Central Balkan Tribes* (Amsterdam, 1978), 228, 238, 241.

¹⁴ A. und J. Šašel, *Inscriptiones Latinae quae in Iugoslavia inter annos MCMIII et MCMXL repertae et editae sunt* (Ljubljana, 1986), 62 no. 1445.

¹⁵ Last search 23.5.2013.

¹⁶ L. Gounaropoulou and M. Hatzopoulos (edd.), *Επιγραφές Κάτω Μακεδονίας Α. Επιγραφές Βεροίας* (Athens, 1998), no. 23 (Macedonia, third century B.C.): [Κ]υννάνα; *ibid.* no. 391 (Macedonia, early third century B.C.): Κυννάνα; *SEG* 32.583 (Atrax, Thessalia, fourth century B.C.): [Κ]υννάνα; *IG* 9.2.334 (Mylai, Perrhaibia, unknown date): Κυννάνα; *IG* 9.2.568 (Larisa, unknown date): [Κ]ύ[ν]νη; I. I. Tolstoi, *Греческие граффити древних городов северного причерноморья* (Moscow, 1953), 81 no. 125 (Nymphaeum, fourth century B.C.): [Κύ]ννα. Cf. also *LGN* 4.204 and 3B.251.

¹⁷ *SEG* 40.514 from the *polis* and island of Issa (second or first century B.C.) mentions one Κυννίς Καλλισθένης. The name Κυννίς occurs already in a Greek inscription within a Greek context from Ephesus (fifth or fourth century B.C.): Ch. Börker and R. Merkelbach, *Die Inschriften von Ephesos*, vol. 2 (Bonn, 1979), no. 131. Cf. *LGN* 5.260; another record comes from Kos (first century B.C. or A.D.): W.R. Paton and E.L. Hicks, *The Inscriptions of Cos* (Hildesheim, 1990), no. 124. Cf. also *LGN* 1.279. Krahe (n. 9), 33 s.v. *Cynnīs*: 'Der Name kann griechisch sein; doch darf auch an illyr. Κύννα erinnert werden.' Again there is no record from the Latin inscriptions of Illyria.

The case of Cynna(ne) is a nice example how dangerous a field onomastics can be: a somewhat careless interpretation of a single name, recorded only in the inscription from Skopje, can prompt far-reaching conclusions via different stages of scientific reception. Whatever Cynnae felt herself – or her parents intended her – to be, her name was surely Greek and is no hint to a personal Illyrian identity or an Illyrian tradition within the Argead dynasty.

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¹⁸ Z. Mirdita, *Antroponimia e Dardanisë në kohën romake* (Pristina, 1981), 94 and 146 qualifies Cinna as Latin *cognomen*. Cf. 151, where the name is missing among the Illyrian *cognomina*.

¹⁹ On the Latin or Etruscan *cognomen* Cinna, cf. I. Kajanto, *The Latin Cognomina* (Helsinki, 1965), 42 and 106–7.

ONE SIGN AFTER ANOTHER: THE FIFTH ΛΕΙΠΤΗ IN ARATUS’ PHAEN. 783–4?

καλὸν δ’ ἐπὶ σήματι σῆμα
σκέπτεσθαι, μᾶλλον δὲ δυοῖν εἰς ταῦτ’ ἰόντων
ἐλπωρὴ τελέθῃ, τριτάτῳ δὲ κε θαρσύνεσθαι. (*Phaen.* 1142–4)

It is a good idea to observe one sign after another, and if two agree, it is more hopeful, while with a third you can be confident.¹

Appropriately for a poet who is ‘subtly speaking’ (λεπτολόγος), the epithet applied to him by Ptolemy III Euergetes (*Suppl. Hell.* 712.4), Aratus does not cease offering unexpected material to explore. This statement holds true also for the famous passage containing the acrostic ΛΕΙΠΤΗ (lines 783–7):

λεπτὴ μὲν καθαρή τε περὶ τρίτον ἡμᾶρ εὐόσα
εὐδῖός κ’ εἶη, λεπτὴ δὲ καὶ εὐ μάλ’ ἐρευθῆς
πνευματὴν, παχίων δὲ καὶ ἀμβλείῃσι κερααῖαις
τέτρατον ἐκ τριτάτοιο φῶς ἀμενηνὸν ἔχουσα
ἢ νῶτ’ ἀμβλυνταὶ ἢ ὕδατος ἐγγὺς ἐόντος. 785

If slender and clear about the third day, she will bode fair weather; if slender and very red, wind; if the crescent is thickish, with blunted horns, having a feeble fourth-day light after the third day, either it is blurred by a southerly or because rain is in the offing.

In modern times, its hidden layers were detected gradually. For centuries, the students of the *Phaenomena* were aware only of what was visible while reading horizontally, that is, of the two instances of ΛΕΙΠΤΗ inserted, respectively, in lines 783 and 784. Significant pro-

¹ The text and translation of Aratus are taken from D. Kidd, *Aratus: Phaenomena* (Cambridge, 1997).